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Missão Permanente de Portugal
Genebra

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

46TH SESSION

- ITEM 9 -

(Right to Self-determination)

2nd
Right of Reply

Mr José J. Pereira Gomes, on behalf
of the Portuguese Delegation

Geneva, 5 February 1990

Madame Chairperson,

1. It is with regret that my delegation takes the floor again but the statement made by the Indonesian delegation this morning, in its second right of reply, requires from the Portuguese delegation a brief comment.

2. It is contradictory for the Indonesian delegation to state that it doesn't want to be involved "in irrelevant quarrels" and at the same time to raise controversial issues which are not of any relevance to the right of the people of East Timor to self-determination.

3. What is at stake is not the four hundred (400) years of Portuguese colonisation.

4. The question is whether or not the people of East Timor have exercised its right to self-determination.

5. The answer is no!

And that was clearly stated by the Security Council and the General Assembly through various resolutions.

6. The question then is why?

Because in December 1975 Indonesia invaded the territory and since then has kept it under tight military control repressing the voice of the people of East Timor.

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7. Portugal started the decolonization process after the revolution in April 1974. It applied to all the then portuguese colonies.

8. This process concerning East Timor was under way when the indonesian Government decided to invade the territory.

By doing so Indonesia prevented the people of East Timor from exercising its right to self-detrmination.

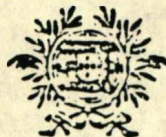
9. My delegation does not want to mention here and now the various press reports concerning the gross violations of Human Rights that very sadly have been present in the daily life of the people of East Timor since the Indonesian invasion.

We would like to recall here the hope expressed by the Sub-Commission in its resolution last August, that the Indonesian Government will allow representatives of human rights organizations to visit the territory, wich has not been the case until now.

10. If the Indonesian Government is so proud of its achievements in the field of human rights in Timor it should have no problem in allowing representatives of NGO's to visit freely the territory.

This would contribute to have a clear picture of the real situation there.

Thank you Madame Chairperson.



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